

WATER QUALITY STANDARDS REGULATIONS STATEMENT OF PURPOSE TO ADOPT REGULATIONS

The Commissioner of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection intends to adopt RCSA sections 22a-426-1 through 22a-426-9, inclusive, to be known as the Connecticut Water Quality Standards Regulations. These regulations are being proposed under the authority of section 22a-426 of the Connecticut General Statutes, in accordance with Section 9 of Public Act 10-158.

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of these regulations is to codify Connecticut's established Water Quality Standards into regulations.

A. The problems, issues or circumstances that the regulation proposes to address.

The Water Quality Standards set the overall policy for management of surface water and ground water quality in accordance with the state and federal clean water programs. They designate use goals, define allowable discharges, and identify measures necessary to maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of Connecticut's waters, provide for the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife, for recreation in and on the water, and to protect public and private drinking water supplies. The Surface Water Quality Standards are consistent with Section 303 of the federal Clean Water Act and serve to qualify the state and its municipalities for available federal grants for water pollution control.

The established Water Quality Standards go through a public review process in accordance with state statute and federal law. The most recent revision of the Standards was finalized February 25, 2011.

These regulations are being proposed under the authority of section 22a-426 of the Connecticut General Statutes. This section was recently amended to require the promulgation of the state's Water Quality Standards as regulations. The proposed regulations codify the existing Standards into a regulatory format in fulfillment of the statute's requirements. There are no substantive changes to the existing standards proposed as part of this rulemaking exercise.

B. Summary of the main provision of the proposed amendment.

The proposed regulations include, but are not limited to, provisions regarding: (1) short title; (2) purpose, goals and applicability; (3) definitions; (4) surface waters; (5) biological condition gradient model; (6) lake trophic category; (7) ground waters; (8) antidegradation standards and antidegradation implementation procedures; and (9) environmental criteria.

C. The legal effects of the proposed amendment on existing regulations or other laws. There is no impact on existing regulations or other laws.